[Mr. G. Harisarvottama Rao.] [26th March 1929

the administration. If what the hon. Member from Ganjam has stated is true, the Minister cuts off even the loan which this Board wants for its own purposes and here is a spectacle of a corporation carrying on business under the direction of a Minister and begging loans. I do not understand the real import of a loan being granted to the Endowments Board. If the Government takes it into its head to take up the administration of the whole department itself, let them do so and come before us for money to spend on that department and then there would be efficiency there. If the Government on the other hand think that the Endowments Board should shift for itself, let them say so, and allow the Board to cancel or to annul itself. There is no good playing hide-and-seek in this matter and let us have a clear statement from the Government as to its intentions. It is no good telling us that the Religious Endowments Board will be able, after six months, to pay this amount of Rs. 24,000 with interest or free of interest. What is the interest that the Government is going to charge on this loan ?"

The hon. Dr. P. SUBBARAYAN :—" $5\frac{3}{4}$ per cent."

* Mr. G. HARISARVOTTAMA RAO :—" Yes, $5\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. But, why should a corporation that carries on the business of the Government for the better administration of the country be charged with such an interest as that, I do not understand at all, except it be that the hon. Minister wants to be safe without being disturbed with regard to the details of administration. I do not know if the theory has been started as in the excise policy. I do not know whether the hon. Minister will ere long start the theory that it is a corporation independently working and that this House has no control and that he cannot answer any questions or interpellations that we may ask. Unless Government makes up its mind to act clearly and definitely, I do not see any reason for them to come before this House with this token cut. A token cut is a dangerous matter. It makes the Corporation's position humiliating. The hon. Minister has to-day chosen to give them a loan of Rs. 24,000, he wants us to concede to the principle of giving a loan and to grant this token cut. I do not know whether there is anything that will prevent the Minister from giving more or less or bargaining with the Religious Endowments Board, with regard to the details of the loan, details of the interest and for using the Board in a manner not very conducive to the interests of the country. I do not want that the Board should be a beggar at the door of the Government or of the Minister. I therefore feel that this grant should not be made."

1-15 p.m. The hon. the PRESIDENT :—" I take it the House is ready for a vote. The question is that Government be granted a further sum not exceeding Rs. 100 under Grant XXXVI—Loans and Advances by Provincial Government."

The motion was put and carried and the grant made.

IV

MADRAS SERVICES COMMISSION BILL—SITTINGS OF THE SELECT COMMITTEE AT OOTACAMUND.

Diwan Bahadur S. KUMARASWAMI REDDIYAR :—" Sir I beg to move—

'*That this Council authorizes the Select Committee appointed by it to report on the Madras Services Commission Bill (Bill No. 5 of 1929) to hold its sittings at Ootacamund to consider the Bill and to draft the report*'.

" The Select Committee is not likely to sit till after the 15th April. I therefore submit that the balance of convenience will certainly be in favour of

holding the sitting in Ootacamund. In connexion with the Brothels Bill, the House was influenced only by the consideration that as some ladies have to be examined the balance of convenience will be in holding the sitting at Madras. There is as yet no such thing here, because it is not proposed to examine any witnesses.

"Looked at from the pecuniary point of view, I may say the expenditure will be much less if the meeting is held at Ootacamund than in Madras. It so happens that most of the members of the select committee live nearer Ootacamund than Madras and so their travelling allowance will be smaller than that they will claim if the meeting is to take place in Madras. Further Members of Government will be at that time in Ootacamund and if the meeting is to be held at Madras they will have to travel to this place, and you know that they generally travel only in saloons. Therefore, viewed at from the point of view of convenience and expenditure the more advantageous course would be to hold the meeting in Madras (hear, hear and laughter), I mean at Ootacamund. I therefore move that this Council do vote for this."

Mr. C. GOPALA MENON :—"I beg to second it."

* Mr. G. HARISARVOTTAMA RAO :—"Mr. President, Sir, I rise to oppose this motion. My friend in putting the case referred to another motion which was opposed on the floor of this House and which was eventually withdrawn. The reasons are less urgent in this case. The Public Services Commission Bill is a Bill that may wait for a time, it having waited for such a length of time already. And my friend, while moving, was doubtful as to whether witnesses would be summoned before this committee or not. He said 'as yet' there is no proposal to call witnesses before this committee. 'As yet' indicates there may be proposals to examine witnesses. If that thing happens it is the same thing, it is identically the same thing as the other case except for the difference in the degree of emergency. I am not totally against doing business in the hills, so long as the Government go there. But I am opposed to this matter going to the hills. This is a question which can stand over for some time, and if Government do not come to a conclusion on this matter no violent departure from the ordinary would be made, though of course the whole country would be glad to have the matter disposed of as early as possible. There is nothing emergent about it, as in the matter of the Brothels Bill. Knowing all these facts, I should little expect my friend whom I credit with a little eye on the popular interest that he should have come forward with this motion. I hope he will withdraw it and I also hope that if he does not withdraw, this House will not vote for it."

* The hon. Sir NORMAN MARJORIBANKS :—"Sir, Government support this motion as they want to expedite this important measure. Further it is not calculated to cost more than, in fact it will be less costly than, meeting in Madras."

Mr. F. E. JAMES :—"Sir, may I ask the hon. the Revenue Member one question? Is it the intention of Government to bring this Bill before this Council in its lifetime?"

* The hon. Sir NORMAN MARJORIBANKS :—"Yes, Sir; otherwise we would not be supporting this motion."

The hon. the PRESIDENT :—" I take it the House is ready for a vote. The question is ' that this Council authorizes the select committee appointed by it to report on the Madras Services Commission Bill (Bill No. 5 of 1929) to hold its sittings at Ootacamund to consider the Bill and to draft the report."

The motion was put and carried.

V

REPORT OF THE PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE FOR 1926-27.

* The hon. the PRESIDENT :—" The Council will now take into consideration the Report [a] of the Public Accounts Committee."

* Sriman BISWANATH DAS Mahasayo :—" Sir, I am one of those who appended a dissenting minute to the report and I want to say something on this important subject. From the report you will see that there has been unfortunately a tendency to under-estimate the revenue and over-estimate the expenditure. The over-estimation of the revenue will be seen from a consideration of the estimates of revenue for the last number of years. I will refer hon. Members to the estimates for 1925–26 and 1927–28. I was able to pick it up here only ; and I may add that what holds good for these two years holds good also for the other years. Thus in the estimates for the year 1925–26, hon. Members will see that while Government expect a revenue of 16½ crores, the amount actually realized shows sixteen crores and nineteen lakhs. Similarly for the year 1927–28 while the estimate was 16·54 crores the actual amount realized for the year as per account is 17·56 crores, i.e., over a crore. This shows that the revenues of the province have not been properly estimated. Not only the revenues have not been under-estimated but that the expenditure side has also been over-estimated. Besides that most of the departments to whom money was allotted have not spent the money but have allowed it to lapse and the lapsed amounts work up in lakhs To quote some figures, in 1923–24, the lapsed money alone amounted to 88·3 lakhs. For 1924–25 the lapses amounted to 63 lakhs. For 1926-27 the lapses amounted to one crore and sixty-three lakhs. Such an estimate leads to the result of an irresponsible system of administration that could be thought of. Sir, the Accountant-General and the Auditor-General year after year have been warning Government about this sad state of budgeting as also to the control of expenditure ; but these have never been attended to either by the Finance Department or by the heads of the departments concerned or by the controlling officers of the Government. Sir, I will take a little time of the House to invite the attention of hon. Members to the remarks of the Accountant-General and the Auditor-General for the year 1923–24. At page 22, the Auditor-General agrees and accepts the remarks of the Accountant-General in the following words : ' Even so, I endorse fully the remarks made by the Accountant-General, Madras, that the necessity for economy and curtailment of expenditure as well as for development of revenue still exists.' Similar remarks occur at pages 56 and 11 in the reports for the years 1924–25 and 1926–27. These warnings of the Accountant-General and the Auditor-General time after time and year after year have not been heeded by the Government. Thus we have to deal with a budget where the expenditure as per accounts exceeds the estimates ; and it exceeds the actual expenditure by 10 per cent. That is seen from the report

[a] Vide proceedings of the 11th March 1929.